

# Ashland/Northern States Power Lakefront Site – Interim Remedial Actions

October 2000

RR-657



## Introduction

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is proposing to take interim remedial action on a portion of the Ashland/Northern States Power (NSP) Lakefront Site known as the seep area.

The purpose of this project is to investigate the cause of the on-going discharge to the seep area and to take necessary actions to eliminate future releases of contamination to the surface.

Currently, up to seven feet of free product tar exists in the area adjacent to the seep. Water rises to the surface, carrying tar and other contaminants, which pose a health risk. The area has been fenced to prevent access.

## Background

The Ashland/NSP Lakefront Site is made up of several properties within the city of Ashland, Wisconsin, including NSP, Wisconsin Central Limited railroad corridor (WCL) and Kreher Park. The site also includes about 10 acres of sediment and surface waters in Chequamegon Bay.

The site's boundaries include U.S. Highway 2 to the south, Prentice Avenue to the east, Ellis Avenue to the west, and Chequamegon Bay to the north.

## Project Summary

Beginning in October, the DNR will oversee a series of activities to investigate the source of contamination in the seep area and implement an interim measure to remove as much of the contaminants from this area as possible.

This action is called an "interim" measure because it only addresses a small area during the time when options for cleanup of the entire site are being evaluated.

## What Activities Will Occur At The Site?

In early October, small trees and brush located in and around the seep area were removed in preparation for the following activities.

**Access Road** – an access road will be constructed from Marina Drive, near the former wastewater treatment plant, south to the seep area. This will allow construction equipment and work personnel access to the area.

**Trench** – a trench approximately 3 feet wide and 60 feet long will be excavated to a depth of up to 15 feet along the south side of the railroad tracks just above the area where the seep is located. The purpose of this action is to excavate through the old filled ravine in order to identify any existing pipes or other conduits that may be transporting water or contaminants to the seep area.

A collection system and barrier will then be installed in the trench in order to reduce the amount of water discharging to the seep area.

Material removed during excavation will be sent to the City of Ashland landfill for disposal. Significant air emissions are not anticipated during this portion of the project, but continuous air quality monitoring will take place to ensure odors are not a problem.

**Test Pits** – following completion of the trench, two test pits – each approximately 60 feet long and 10 feet deep – will be excavated perpendicular to each other through the center of the seep. This work will be completed under a fully enclosed structure, which is estimated to be 100 feet long, 60 feet wide and 40 feet high.

Air will be pulled through the structure during construction activities and then run through a carbon treatment unit before being discharged to the atmosphere. Continuous air quality monitoring will be done during the duration of the project.

A collection system consisting of perforated plastic pipe will be installed at the base of the



trenches and connected to a solid riser pipe. The trenches will be initially backfilled with stone and then with earth in order to match the surrounding ground surface.

Material removed during excavation of the trenches will be tested and if appropriate sent to the City of Ashland's landfill. If testing determines that some materials are not appropriate for the City's landfill, they will be segregated and properly managed.

**Contaminant Removal** – liquid will be extracted from the newly installed riser pipe on a routine basis in order to dry up the seep area as much as possible.

**Final Interim Measure** – all available information will be evaluated in order to determine the best remedial options for the seep area. It is anticipated that the final phase of construction will consist of removing contaminated water, soil, oils, tars and other contaminants from the entire seep area.

This work will allow the area to be backfilled with clean soil, and seeded in the spring. If this removal action is successful, it may result in the fence being permanently removed. It is expected that this work will also take place under a fully enclosed structure, with treatment of the air discharge, and continuous air quality monitoring.

#### **What About Noise And Odor Problems?**

Construction activities at the site will take place during normal work hours. During this time construction equipment will be operating and there will be dump trucks and tanker trucks transporting waste materials out of the site for proper disposal. While increased noise levels will occur during construction, given the limited scope of this project the added truck traffic and construction should not present a serious noise problem.

During removal of contamination from the seep area, you may notice odors, like mothballs or petroleum, coming from the work site. Measures will be taken to control releases of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) for both workers and the public. Workers will be wearing protective clothing and equipment when working at the seep area.

While odors from the cleanup may be a nuisance, human's sense of smell can often notice an odor at much lower levels than what is a health concern. Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) staff do not anticipate that these odors will cause health effects to nearby residents.

#### **How Long Will This Action Take?**

The DNR expects work to begin in early November and be completed by early January. Since this site is adjacent to a school, residences and highly-used summer recreation areas, work will take place during the colder months to reduce the potential for human exposure to odors and contaminants at the site.

#### **Contacts**

**To report complaints or discuss site activities, please contact Jamie Dunn, Project Manager, DNR Northern Region, 715-635-4049, [dunnj@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:dunnj@dnr.state.wi.us).**

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#### **For More Information**

For more information on the health, history and investigation of the site, please see the DNR's web site at [www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/cleanup/ashland](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/cleanup/ashland).

To see official documents and records for this site, please visit the following locations:

Vaughn Public Library  
502 W. Main St., Ashland, WI 54806  
715-682-7060

Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute  
Northland College, 1411 Ellis Avenue  
Ashland, WI 54806  
715-682-1223